

Appl. No. 10/687,384

Attorney Docket No. 10541-1868

## II. Remarks

Reconsideration and re-examination of this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is herein respectfully requested.

### *Claim Objections*

Claims 7-10 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

### *Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §102(e)*

Claims 1, 2, 5, 15, 16, 19, and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,578,444 to Wendelin (Wendelin).

Claims 1 and 15 teach the clutch adapted to couple the steering mechanism with the road wheel (i.e., through a mechanical steering linkage 15) when the road wheel is in an end of travel condition.

In Wendelin, the clutches 102 act to couple the hand wheel module 800 to the steering shaft 700. However, as shown in Figure 2, the shaft 700 couples the hand wheel module 800 to an electric motor 500 not to the road wheel (200 or 300). The motor 500 is used to provide torque feedback through the hand wheel module 800 to the user. The steering shaft 700 and the clutches 102 are not connected between the hand wheel module 800 to the road wheel. Therefore, Wendelin cannot teach the clutch coupling the steering mechanism to the road wheel, and does not anticipate claims 1 and 15. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(e).

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*Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103(a)*

Claims 3, 4, 6, 17, 18 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,578,444 to Wendelin (Wendelin) in view of U.S. Patent 6,681,881 to Andonian, et al. (Andonian).

Claims 22 and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,578,444 to Wendelin (Wendelin) in view of U.S. Patent 6,598,695 to Menjak, et al. (Menjak).

Claims 11, 13 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,578,444 to Wendelin (Wendelin) in view of U.S. Patent 6,484,838 to Borsting, et al. (Borsting).

Claims 12 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,578,444 to Wendelin (Wendelin) in view of U.S. Patent 6,484,838 to Borsting, et al. (Borsting) and further in view of U.S. Patent 6,681,881 to Andonian, et al. (Andonian).

Claims 3, 4, 6, 11-14, 17, 18, 20, and 22-24 depend, directly or indirectly, from claims 1 and 15 and are, therefore, patentable for at least the reasons given above in support of claims 1 and 15.

*New Claims*

Claims 25 and 26 depend from claims 1 and 15 and are, therefore, patentable for at least the reasons given above in support of claims 1 and 15.

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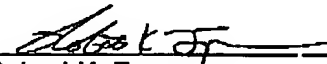
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*Conclusion*

In view of the above amendments and remarks, It is respectfully submitted that the present form of the claims are patentably distinguishable over the art of record and that this application is now in condition for allowance. Such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted b/,

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